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Environment and sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 100 (see A/54/588, para. 2). Action on sub-item (d) was taken at the 29th and 44th meetings, on 1 November and 1 December 1999. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/54/SR.29 and 44).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.18 and A/C.2/54/L.54

2. At the 29th meeting, on 1 November, the representative of Guyana, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind" (A/C.2/54/L.18), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 50/115 of 20 December 1995, 51/184 of 16 December 1996 and 52/199 of 18 December 1997 and other relevant resolutions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in eight parts, under the symbol A/54/588 and Add.1-7.

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"*Noting with satisfaction* that most States and one regional economic integration organization have ratified or acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

"*Expressing its concern* at the slow pace of ratification and accession to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which has so far attracted fifteen ratifications,

"*Expressing its deep appreciation* to the Government of Argentina for hosting the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which culminated in the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action,

"*Noting* that the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was convened in Bonn, Germany, from 25 October to 5 November 1999,

"*Stressing* the importance of a successful outcome to the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties, welcoming the generous offer of the Government of the Netherlands to host the Conference, and urging the parties to undertake thorough preparations to advance progress at the session,

"*Taking note* of the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session to approve the continuation of the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations subject to review not later than 31 December 2001, in consultation with the Secretary-General, with a view to making such modifications as may be desirable by both parties,

"*Taking note also* of the decision of the Conference of the Parties whereby the General Assembly is invited to decide at its fifty-fourth session on the issue of meeting the Convention's conference-servicing expenses from its regular budget, taking into account the views expressed by Member States,

"*Noting* the oral report of the Secretary-General and the advice on the continuation of the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations,

"*Noting also* that by paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 50/115 the Secretary-General was requested to make the necessary arrangements to include in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 1998-1999 those sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies that the Conference may need to convene in that period,

"1. *Encourages* Member States that have not ratified or acceded to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to do so with a view to bringing it into force;

"2. *Calls upon* developed countries to undertake urgent and effective steps to implement their commitments under the Kyoto Protocol through domestic action;

"3. *Approves* the continuation of the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations, as advised by the Secretary-General and approved by the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session;

"4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to review the functioning of this institutional linkage not later than 31 December 2001, in consultation with the Conference of the Parties, with a view to making such modifications as may be considered desirable by both parties, and to report thereon to the General Assembly;

"5. *Decides* to include in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2000-2001 the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for that biennium, entailing twelve weeks of meetings requiring conference servicing;

"6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements to include in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2002-2003 those sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies that the Conference may need to convene during that period;

"7. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-sixth session the sub-item entitled 'Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind'."

3. At the 44th meeting, on 1 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Daúl Matute (Peru), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind" (A/C.2/54/L.54), which was submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.18.

4. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.54 (see A/C.2/54/SR.44).

5. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.54 (see para. 8).

6. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.54, draft resolution A/C.2/54/L.18 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

7. The representative of the United States of America made a statement before the adoption of the draft resolution (see A/C.2/54/SR.44).

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 50/115 of 20 December 1995, 51/184 of 16 December 1996 and 52/199 of 18 December 1997 and other relevant resolutions relating to the protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

Noting with satisfaction that most States and one regional economic integration organization have ratified or acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[1]

[1] A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex I.

Noting that, to date, the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[2] has attracted sixteen ratifications, and encouraging necessary action to facilitate the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol at the earliest possible date,

Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of Argentina for hosting the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which culminated in the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action,[3]

Noting that the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was held at Bonn, Germany, from 25 October to 5 November 1999,

Taking note of decision 1/CP.5 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its fifth session, stressing the importance of a successful outcome to the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties, in particular in reaching decisions on the early and full implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, and welcoming, in that decision, the agreement to an intensified process of negotiations leading to the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties,

Welcoming the generous offer of the Government of the Netherlands to host the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties, and urging the Parties to undertake thorough preparations to advance progress at that session,

Taking note of the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session to approve the continuation of the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations, subject to review not later than 31 December 2001, in consultation with the Secretary-General, with a view to making such modifications as may be desirable by both parties,

Taking note also of the decision of the Conference of the Parties whereby the General Assembly is invited to decide at its fifty-fourth session on the issue of meeting the Convention's conference-servicing expenses from its regular budget, taking into account the views expressed by Member States,

Noting the oral report of the Secretary-General and the advice on the continuation of the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations,

Noting also that, by paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 50/115, the Secretary-General was requested to make the necessary arrangements to include in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 1998-1999 those sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies that the Conference may need to convene in that period,

1. *Encourages* Member States that have not ratified or acceded to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[2] to do so with a view to bringing it into force;

2. *Calls upon* all States parties to continue to take effective steps to implement their commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[1] in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities;

3. *Encourages* all countries to work constructively towards advancing the work necessary for the timely entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and its implementation;

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[2] FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3.

[3] FCCC/CP/1998/16/Add.1, decision 1/CP.4.

4. *Approves* the continuation of the institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations, as advised by the Secretary-General and approved by the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session;

5. *Encourages* the Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity[4] and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification,[5] particularly in Africa, to further examine appropriate opportunities and measures to strengthen their complementarities and improve scientific assessments of ecological linkages between the three conventions;

6. *Encourages* the secretariats of various environmental and environment-related conventions and other international organizations, with full respect for the status of the respective convention secretariats and the autonomous decision-making prerogatives of the conferences of the parties of the conventions concerned, to strengthen cooperation with a view to facilitating progress in their implementation at the international, regional and national levels;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to review the functioning of this institutional linkage not later than 31 December 2001, in consultation with the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, with a view to making such modifications as may be considered desirable by both parties, and to report thereon to the General Assembly;

8. *Decides* to include in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2000-2001 the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for that biennium, in accordance with the decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties;

9. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session the sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind".

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[4] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[5] A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.